

NEWARK BOARD OF EDUCATION  
ACTION MEETING  
WEST SIDE HIGH SCHOOL  
MAY 29, 1979

EXCERPTS OF MINUTES OF  
MEETING OF THE NEWARK  
BOARD OF EDUCATION -  
ACTION MEETING

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BEFORE: NANCY J. GILMARTIN, Certified Shorthand Reporter

AT: THE NEWARK BOARD OF EDUCATION  
2 Cedar Street  
Newark, New Jersey

Date: February 25, 1980

DOERNER & GOLDBERG, INC.  
CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTERS  
80 MAIN STREET  
WEST ORANGE, NEW JERSEY 07052

(201) 736-5130

2 VICTOR DE LUCA: My name is Victor DeLuca.

3 Tonight I'm representing the Ironbound Community  
4 School. As you may or may not know, the Community  
5 School became a Newark Board of Education School  
6 five years ago. It entered into a lease and  
7 contract with the Board of Education for a five-  
8 year term. That term is up this year.

9 We worked pretty hard over January and  
10 February to draft a proposed lease and contract  
11 for the upcoming year and we submitted it to Mr.  
12 Kitchens on February 13th. As of this day, we  
13 have not received any word from his office as to  
14 the disposition.

15 We have been given deadlines as to when we  
16 will hear that answer. We were told April 15th.  
17 Last week, we were told this week. I didn't come  
18 here to say that much about that. I just wanted  
19 to state that we're, on our part, we're actively  
20 working, trying to renegotiate and reenter this  
21 arrangement with the Board of Education.

22 What I'd like to go into a little bit is the  
23 arrangement. I think the five years have been  
24 both good and both bad -- both good and bad. It's  
25 been difficult for both parties, but I think it

1  
2        said something.    I think five years ago, the  
3        Board of Education, sitting just like you are now,  
4        made a statement that they were going to look at  
5        education in Newark and take an opportunity to  
6        experiment with the different types of education  
7        which included individualized instruction and  
8        real parent involvement.    That was five years ago.

9        A lot of things have happened in that five  
10      years, but I think we're still talking about what's  
11      best for the student and what's best for the family  
12      as a whole.

13      I've heard many people on this Board speak  
14      about the need to get back to basics, the need to  
15      make sure that children are given the proper tools  
16      to carry forth in life.   I think there is a mis-  
17      nomer or misunderstanding about our school.   In  
18      no way do we neglect that.   None of our children  
19      are not taught to read, are not taught to write,  
20      are not taught the basics.   That's an integral  
21      part of our program, but while we're doing that,  
22      we're also able to deal with the social side of the  
23      child, an effective, if you will, development.  
24      So that the total child is learned and grows to-  
25      gether.

1 I think that's been proven.

2 And our tests scores have been outstanding.  
3 They can be documented, and while they are out-  
4 standing, they only measure the basics and they  
5 don't even measure the social side, the social  
6 development of our students. So, I think that's  
7 an additional plus that we have to look at when  
8 we're judging our school.

9  
10 I don't come here with our hat in our hands.  
11 I don't think that's the relationship that we're  
12 in. I come here as an equal partnership -- equal  
13 partner in a partnership of education for children.  
14 I'm not saying that the Ironbound Community School  
15 is not different. It is different. So is  
16 Science High School, so probably is Wilson Avenue  
17 over on Ann Street, over Speedway Junior High  
18 School, over Broadway Junior High School. Every  
19 school is different. Every school has its own  
20 dynamics, its own teachers, its own nucleus.

21 Now, why we're here is because we've come  
22 to say we need to sit down and talk and continue  
23 this partnership.

24 We certainly need to have an answer from  
25 the Board. It is similar -- somewhat unfair at

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2       this point with only one more month of school for  
3       parents and staff not to know what school their child  
4       is going to next year if, in fact, the Community  
5       School is not going to be part of the Newark Board  
6       of Education.

7       Many of you have come down. We have invited  
8       many of you and you haven't been able to make it  
9       yet and the invitation is still open. It's not  
10      a closed school. In many respects, it is part of  
11      a growing corporation, the Ironbound Community  
12      Corporation, in that we're able to deal with the  
13      total family both in education and health, from  
14      preschool to adult education.

15      In many ways, you're getting a lot more for  
16      your money. So, we're asking you to give us an  
17      answer, after careful evaluation, and we're then asking  
18      you to know our school firsthand and come down and  
19      visit and come down and talk with the children and  
20      with the parents and we hope that we can continue  
21      in this partnership and that we can continue to  
22      come to Board meetings and talk about the business  
23      of educating children and, I think, if we can do  
24      that, then our relationship will be much smoother.  
25      Thank you.

2                   CARL SHARIF:    Thank you.

3                   Can I find out what's the story with the  
4                   Ironbound Community School at this point in  
5                   time?

6                   ALONZO KITTRELS:    I think Mr. DeLuca  
7                   outlined precisely what the situation is; that we  
8                   had initially established April 15 as a date for  
9                   information to be provided to the parents at  
10                   Ironbound Community School; that since that time,  
11                   I believe last week, I saw some of the parents  
12                   outside this building and we indicated that infor-  
13                   mation will be provided this week.

14                   I'd like to just remind the Board that this  
15                   item was to be discussed during the budget hearings.  
16                   I believe a letter was forwarded to the Board and  
17                   I requested that the administration be given an  
18                   opportunity to review the progress of the school  
19                   and make an appropriate recommendation to the  
20                   Board regarding the program.

21                   That has not yet been finalized.    We do  
22                   intend to adhere to the time schedule that we  
23                   established; that is, some discussions this week  
24                   regarding recommendations that I will make to the  
25                   Board regarding the school.    Regret that we were

2 unable to make it prior to this time, but a  
3 meeting will take place this week with Mr. DeLuca,  
4 between parents, the principal at the school and  
5 my staff regarding the future of the Ironbound  
6 School.

7 CARL SHARIF: Dr. Heldago.

8 DR. HILDA HELDAGO: Mr. Chairman, it  
9 seems to me that if this kind of staff and  
10 community decisions are going to be reached this  
11 week, that this item will not come to the Board at  
12 the earliest will be June. It will not be  
13 approved until the end of June at the Action  
14 Meeting and it seems to me that at that place, a  
15 school like the Ironbound Community School, that  
16 depends so heavy in parent involvement and participa-  
17 tion in the total educational component, that a  
18 very disadvantage or position or not knowing until  
19 the very end of June whether they will or will not  
20 be in operation come September because even if the  
21 negotiations between the office of the Superinten-  
22 dent and the people in the school takes place,  
23 there's no way the Board can take action on this  
24 item until the teacher meeting. And I think that  
25 is unfair to put the parents and the children in

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2 that kind of uncertainty of literally ending the  
3 school year and not knowing where the children  
4 will be for next year for sure.

5 ALONZO KITTEPLES: Mr. Sharif.

6 CARL SHARIF: Mr. Kittrels.

7 ALONZO KITTEPLES: That was clearly not our  
8 intent, Dr. Heldago. Our intent, as I outlined  
9 to the parents last week, that this week they will  
10 know precisely where I stand. If, based on  
11 information that I provide, parents are not  
12 satisfied, then I would arrange immediately with  
13 your approval a meeting to have this matter further  
14 discussed in an instructional committee long before  
15 the June meeting. And it was my intent to  
16 provide this information this week so that other  
17 discussion meetings could take place so it would  
18 not be waiting until the Action Meeting of June  
19 for some action on the part of this Board.

20 Clearly, a contract expires at the end of  
21 this school year and it will take a recommendation  
22 to continue the arrangement with the Ironbound  
23 Community School. If we make a commitment that  
24 we will make such a recommendation to the Board,  
25 I would hope that the Board would act on it in a

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2 favorable manner. However, if we indicate this  
3 week that is not out intent to make such a recommenda-  
4 tion to this Board with the request of the parents,  
5 if they feel that a meeting with instructional  
6 committee would be helpful, then I will attempt to  
7 schedule such a meeting to avoid last minute  
8 determinations regarding the continuing of the  
9 school in September.

10 DR. HILDA HELDAGO: Mr. Chairman, my question  
11 still remains. The instructional committee does  
12 not make contractual agreements with any party.  
13 It is this Board who makes the contractual agree-  
14 ments with parties and as the best of my under-  
15 standing, again, whatever the decision is taken  
16 by this Board, it puts the Community School in a  
17 position of uncertainty, at best, until the end of  
18 June because the only one who makes contractual  
19 agreements is this Board of Education and I'm,  
20 in fact, concerned about that.

21 I'm further concerned because there seems  
22 to be some question in the mind of the Superinten-  
23 dent, one way or the other, by the fact that the  
24 two positions are presented and, again, they sort  
25 of point out to a basic theme that keeps recurring

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2 in this Board and that maybe the instructional  
3 committee deals constantly.

4 I mean, then, here is a school with a five-  
5 year contract. We definitely seem again to know  
6 that in any five-year contract the last year should  
7 be heavy on evaluation and because it will have  
8 to be renewed and because education takes some  
9 planning ahead, that these kind of situations  
10 should have again been anticipated, provided for,  
11 and as a matter of fact, I don't think it would  
12 be unreasonable to say one year before the contract  
13 is terminated the parties should know whether the  
14 contract is going to be renewed at a future date.

15 When you're dealing with items like these  
16 of children that are going to have to be transposed  
17 from an educational system that has a definite  
18 philosophy, a definite thrust, definite input to  
19 maybe a system that is completely different, it  
20 doesn't seem to me hard or unreasonable to ask  
21 in the best interest of education that this kind  
22 of decisions that we know can be anticipated and  
23 provided for are taken care and that's educational  
24 leadership and that's educational planning and  
25 that's taking care of primary business of this

1  
2 organization, which is the education of youngsters  
3 in our community.

4 I, for one, fail to see why we're constantly  
5 making last minute decisions about things that we  
6 know are going to come like the rain, the sky and  
7 the sun, and somehow or other is going to be  
8 eventually dead and we wait for the last minute  
9 and then we do it on crisis. Sometimes, we do it  
10 in a hostile environment because whatever decision,  
11 especially the decision has to be negative, then  
12 at that time there is really no time to engage  
13 into process that will allow for modifications,  
14 reasoning in maybe a nonhostile environment in  
15 which things to take place.

16 I'm very concerned about this repeating  
17 pattern that this Board is constantly forced to  
18 react on last minute things that should have been  
19 done yesterday and are going to have to be done  
20 that effect people in very definite ways.

21 ALONZO KITTRELS: Mr. Sharif.

22 CARL SHARIF: Mr. Kittrel.

23 ALONZO KITTRELS: I accept Dr. Heldago's  
24 comments as they relate specifically to the  
25 Ironbound Community School.

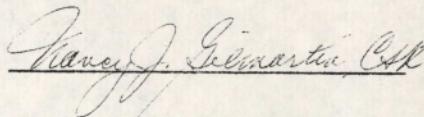
I do not completely accept that this has  
been a pattern over the period of months or years.  
I accept the fact that there could have been more  
planning, that information could have been provided  
at this point, certainly prior to this point.

Still, we have the issue before us and it  
must be addressed and, as I indicated, the process  
that I outlined last week to the parents is a process  
that we will follow and we will provide that  
information this week to the parents regarding my  
recommendation concerning the future of the  
Ironbound Community School.

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3 C E R T I F I C A T I O N  
4

5 I, NANCY J. GILMARTIN, a Certified Shorthand  
6 Reporter and Notary Public of the State of New Jersey, do  
7 hereby certify that the foregoing is a transcription of my  
8 notes as taken of tapes in the aforementioned matter to the  
9 best of my knowledge, ability and understanding.

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13 DATED: March 3, 1980  
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